

**CLAIMS**

1. A method for reducing the expression of a gene of interest in a plant cell, comprising the following steps :

- a. providing a chimeric gene to said plant cell, said chimeric gene comprising the following operably linked DNA fragments :
  - i. a promoter recognized by a DNA dependent RNA polymerase III of said plant cell characterized in that said promoter is a promoter of type III comprising all cis-acting promoter elements which interact with said DNA dependent RNA polymerase III;
  - ii. a DNA fragment which, when transcribed, yields an RNA molecule, said RNA molecule comprising a sense and antisense nucleotide sequence,
    1. said sense nucleotide sequence comprising about 19 contiguous nucleotides having about 90 to about 100% sequence identity to a nucleotide sequence of about 19 contiguous nucleotide sequences from the RNA transcribed from said gene of interest;
    2. said antisense nucleotide sequence comprising about 19 contiguous nucleotides having about 90 to 100% sequence identity to the complement of a nucleotide sequence of about 19 contiguous nucleotide sequence of said sense sequence;
 wherein said sense and antisense nucleotide sequence are capable of forming a double stranded

RNA of about 19 to about 200 nucleotides in length ; and

- iii. an oligo dT stretch comprising at least 4 consecutive T-residues; and
- b. identifying plant cells wherein said expression of said gene of interest is reduced when compared to the expression of said gene of interest in plant cells which do not comprise said chimeric gene.

2. The method according to claim 1, wherein said promoter is a type 3 POLIII promoters selected from the promoter of a plant gene encoding U6snRNA, the promoter of a plant gene encoding U3snRNA or the promoter of a plant gene encoding 7SL RNA.

3. The method according to claim 1 or claim 2, wherein said promoter comprise a nucleotide sequence selected from the nucleotide sequences of SEQ ID No. 1 from the nucleotide at position 7 to the nucleotide at position 322, SEQ ID No. 2 from the nucleotide at position 7 to the nucleotide at position 408, SEQ ID No. 3 from the nucleotide at position 7 to the nucleotide at position 313, SEQ ID No. 4 from the nucleotide at position 7 to the nucleotide at position 446, SEQ ID No. 5 from the nucleotide at position 7 to the nucleotide at position 436, SEQ ID No. 6 from the nucleotide at position 7 to the nucleotide at position 468, SEQ ID No. 7 from the nucleotide at position 7 to the nucleotide at position 384 or SEQ ID No. 8 from the nucleotide at position 7 to the nucleotide at position 421.

4. The method according to any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein said plant cell is a dicotyledonous plant cell and said promoter is derived from a dicotyledonous or monocotyledonous plant or plant cell.
5. The method according to any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein said plant cell is a monocotyledonous plant cell, and said promoter is derived from a monocotyledonous plant or plant cell.
6. The method according to any one of claims 1 to 3 wherein said promoter is endogenous to said plant cell.
7. The method according to any one of claims 1 to 6, wherein said gene of interest is a transgene.
8. The method according to any one of claims 1 to 6, wherein said gene of interest is an endogenous gene.
9. The method according to any one of claims 1 to 8, wherein said plant cell is comprised within a plant.
10. A chimeric gene as described in any of claims 1 to 9.
11. A plant cell comprising a chimeric gene according to claim 10.

12. A plant comprising within its plant cells a chimeric gene according to claim 10.